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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/822,607	04/12/2004	Xavier Paliard	PP01612.011	3674
27476	7590	03/26/2007	EXAMINER	
NOVARTIS VACCINES AND DIAGNOSTICS INC. CORPORATE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY R338 P.O. BOX 8097 Emeryville, CA 94662-8097			LI, BAO Q	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1648	
SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE		MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE	
3 MONTHS		03/26/2007	PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/822,607	PALIARD ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Bao Qun Li	1648	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 December 2006.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 45-65 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 49-62 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 45-48 and 63-65 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

This is a response to the amendment filed on 01/13/07. Claim 45 has been amended. Claims 1-44 were canceled. New claims 63-65 have been added. Claims 45-65 are pending. Claims 49-62 were withdrawn from consideration. Therefore, claims 45-48 and 63-65 are considered before the examiner.

Priority

The later-filed application must be an application for a patent for an invention, which is also disclosed in the prior application (the parent or original nonprovisional application or provisional application). The disclosure of the invention in the parent application and in the later-filed application must be sufficient to comply with the requirements of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112. See *Transco Products, Inc. v. Performance Contracting, Inc.*, 38 F.3d 551, 32 USPQ2d 1077 (Fed. Cir. 1994).

The priority of current application based on the earlier filling date of provisional application No. 60,161,713 is still denied. In the response, applicants neither make any response to this objection nor point out any error of the objection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 45-48 that differ from the prior art after amendment have been considered. The rejection is withdrawn in view of the amendments to the claims.

Double Patenting

2. Applicant's argument with respect to the obviousness type double patenting rejection of claims 45-48 has been respectfully considered, and it is persuasive. The rejection has been withdrawn because the US patent NO. 6,986,892 is directed to a polypeptide rather than polynucleotide cited in the current claims.

New grounds of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 45-48 and 63-65 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

5. Claim 45 is directed to a native NS3, NS4, NS5a, NS5b and core of HCV polypeptide. However, the specification does not define what the native HCV polypeptide is. More importantly, the specification in page 5 define that the claimed polypeptide is **referred as a protein, which includes modifications, such as deletions, additions, and substitutions to the native sequence, so long as the protein maintains the desired activity. Theses modification may be deliberate, as through site-directed mutagenesis, or may be accidental, such as through mutation of hosts which produce the proteins or errors due to PCR amplification.”**

6. The state of art teaches that HCV is a quasispecies virus, in which nucleic acid sequence changes that result in phenotypic changes accumulate over time as described by Simmonds (J. Gene. Virol. 2004, Vol. 85, pp. 3173-3188), Martell et al. (J. Virol. 1992, Vol. 66, No. 2, pp. 3225-3229) and Cabot et al. (J. Virol. 2001, Vol. 75, No. 24, p. 12005-12013). Therefore, without a clear definition regarding what the cited “native” is referred to in the specification, it is unclear for an ordinary skill person in the art what the metes and bound of the cited native HCV polypeptide is.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

7. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

8. Claims 45-48 and 63-65 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter, which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. In the instant case, the amended claim 45 introduces a new matter that is not supported by the specification as it was originally filed.

9. In the response, applicants point out that the support of the amendment of claim 45 can be found at page 5, line 4-14.

10. The specification has been reviewed, the page 5 does not teach that the isolated polynucleotide that encodes a fusion consisting essentially of a native NS3, NS4, NS5a, NS5v and a core polypeptide of an HCV.

11. In contrary to applicants' assertion, regarding the claimed polynucleotide encoding the polypeptide of HCV, the specification of page 5 cites: "**for the purpose of the present invention, "a polypeptide" refers to a protein which includes modifications, such as deletions, additions, and substitutions to the native sequence; so long as the protein maintains the desired activity. These modification may be deliberate, as through site-directed mutagenesis, or may be accidental, such as through mutation of hosts which produce the proteins or errors due to PCR amplification.**"

12. Deleting the new matter would overcome the rejection.

Conclusion

No claims are allowed.

13. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37

Art Unit: 1648

CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Bao Qun Li whose telephone number is 571-272-0904. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30 am to 3:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Bruce Campell can be reached on 571-272-0974. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Bao Qun Li

3/14/2007

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